

FEBRUARY 2020



Fostering Cohesion, Understanding and Harmony in Manchester

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Welcome to the February 2020 Faith Network for Manchester Newsletter

Following a busy week around Holocaust Memorial Day, February started with Hate Crime Awareness Week and a variety of launch events.

We were involved with the Manchester College Human Library event at the Shena Simon Campus on Wednesday 5th February, helping to convey key aspects of hate crime, awareness about it, the importance of reporting it and supporting those affected by it. Of the 140 students involved in the three sessions, several had experiences of their own around hate crime, and some of the discussions and points raised were moving, powerful and poignant.

We held the final two sessions with women of our Challenging Antisemitism in Manchester project, run with the support of the Building a Stronger Britain Together programme. You can read about this project in the newsletter but it was a fitting end to the programme during Hate Crime Awareness Week.

We also supported the Challenging Hate Forum public event focusing on Health and Wellbeing. It was a fascinating afternoon with positive ideas and some useful connections were made to help develop the work in the future. It is important that no

one or group is discriminated against in any way when accessing health and wellbeing services and we must rise to the challenge of facilitating access to them for everyone. This is part of the work of the Interfaith Health and Social Care working party – how we can share good practice, map what is being provided and help establish more opportunities for access.

We actively supported Adswood Primary School in Stockport with their One World Week. We supplied three different faith presenters for extended assemblies during the week, to supplement the three of their own that they had, and provided two stalls for their Cultures Fair. It was an inspirational week and credit goes to their staff, students and visitors who added so much to it.

In this newsletter we have a mixture of reports on recent events and projects and information of upcoming events.

We hope you like the balance and that you will want to attend some of the events – the Faith Sector and Homelessness Summit, the Interfaith Dialogue on Safeguarding, a Climate Change Focus Meeting and a Faith Leaders' Suicide Prevention Learning Event. Details on the first two are in this newsletter.

There was an “Our Faith Our

Planet” meeting of Faith Leaders and Councillor Eve Francis from Manchester City Council, leading to a plan for a Climate Change Focus Meeting for Hulme, Chorlton, Chorlton Park and Whalley Range on Tuesday 24th March. It will be at the Manchester Multifaith Centre from 5.30 to 7.00 p.m. and more details will follow.

Following on from some of the work of the GM Interfaith Health and Social Care working party and the World Mental Health Day Service last year, a learning event about Suicide Prevention is being arranged on Monday 30th March for faith leaders at Friends Meeting House, from 12 to 4 p.m. The event has been organised by the Greater Manchester Health & Social Care Partnership with support from Greater Manchester Mental Health Chaplains and the Faith Network 4 Manchester. More details will follow shortly.

We hope you are having a good and safe February and have not been badly affected by the storms.

Rabbi Warren Elf MBE,
Director of Faith Network for Manchester

GM Faith Sector Summit on Family Homelessness



Thursday 12th March 2020
Methodist Central Hall, Oldham Street,
M1 1JQ, Manchester

At the last GM Homeless Action Network (GMHAN) event, the Shared Health Foundation presented their preliminary findings on the experiences of families experiencing homelessness.

We are therefore calling for the Faith Sector to gather, in conjunction with colleagues from GMHAN, for another Homelessness Faith Sector Summit on Thursday 12 March 2020 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Methodist Central Hall, Manchester (M1 1JQ) to hear more information about family homelessness in GM and to consider how we might contribute to the response.

The programme for the day will include:

Gather over coffee/tea from 10.30 a.m. for an 11 a.m. start

Perspectives & context

Examples of best practice

Mapping existing provision

Where are the gaps & how can we respond: Compassion & Campaigning

Lunch will be provided thanks to Near Neighbours Greater Manchester.

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gm-faith-sector-summit-on-family-homelessness-tickets-88262590785?aff=odeimcmalchimp&mc_cid=eecee736aa&mc_eid=d5751ffe2f

The Background To GM Faith Sector Summit on Family Homelessness

There are currently 2,472 homeless children are living in temporary accommodation across GM. 2 years is considered an average 'temporary' placement. The number of homeless families across GM has risen by over 1000%. The number of homeless families across Greater Manchester currently exceeds 1500, with evidence showing that hidden homeless households could take this figure to 10 times higher than official statistics.

Manchester has the highest number of children living in emergency and temporary accommodation and Oldham has seen the second largest increase in the number of homeless children over a five-year period.

Children who experience homelessness are more likely to experience homelessness as adults; homelessness has a significant impact on children's physical health, their mental health and emotional well-being and children who sofa surf or live in temporary accommodation are much more likely to fall behind in school due to exhaustion, emotional distress and a lack of quiet space to do their homework. With levels reaching crisis point, the Shared Health Foundation has been working with agencies and council teams, as well as families with lived experience of homelessness, to investigate the difficulties being faced.

This event is organised by:

The **Methodist** Church 

sharedhealth
foundation

**NEAR
NEIGHBOURS**
BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER



**GREATER
TOGETHER
MANCHESTER** 



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER



and supported by

faith
Network 4 Manchester

Interfaith Dialogue on Safeguarding

Monday 23rd March 2020

2.00 – 4.30 pm

at Manchester Cathedral



**Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility**

The Challenge Hate Forum (CHF) invites Manchester's Faith Communities to attend an Interfaith Dialogue on Safeguarding.

This will be a unique opportunity for Manchester's faith institutions to get together and the event will include a panel discussion before an audience made up of multi-faith representatives. The panel includes a diverse range of speakers and a Q&A session at the end; the discussion will be hosted by the Dean of Manchester, Rogers Govender.

There will be an interactive drama performance on Blame and Belonging by Odd Arts followed by an open and frank panel discussion on safeguarding our communities; participants will be able to ask questions from the panel.

The purpose of the event to bring Manchester's faith communities together to build a greater awareness of safeguarding; including some of the more challenging and complex issues to share learning and good practice from faith institutions on safeguarding and facilitate discussions on the challenges of protecting vulnerable people from harm.

Attendance is free, but please register your attendance at
<https://interfaithsafeguarding.eventbrite.co.uk>

Refreshments and finger food will be available at the event, with registration at 2pm.

Building A Stronger Britain Together: Challenging Antisemitism, Islamophobia and Hate Crime in Manchester



This project ran through 2019 and into February 2020 and was designed to bring together groups of women to explore issues around antisemitism, Islamophobia and other hate crimes that affect women and our communities in Manchester.

A couple of short films were made highlighting experiences of antisemitism and examples of prejudice and hate crime experienced by the women were used in the workshops.

We looked at a range of situations and considered the role of the bystander in hate incidents and crimes and effective ways of responding to these situations. Obviously one focus was on the importance of reporting any of these incidents but the issue of support for victims was also explored, as well as the response to perpetrators of hate crime.



We are pleased with the workshops we were able to run and have material and findings to use in further work. The evaluations from all of the workshops were incredibly positive. We also hope to be able to work with other groups, in particular young people, using some of this in the future.

Thanks must go to Ruby Begum and Sadia Akram for their support and leadership with this project and running the workshops. Their input was invaluable and valued by all the participants.

If you would like to sponsor some of this work or have us run some of these workshops, please do get in touch with us. It is important that we equip ourselves to deal with antisemitism, Islamophobia and all hate crime in any situation and as the Faith Network for Manchester we believe we have a particular role to fulfil in this area.

MACFEST: Women of Faith Event

Written by Ann Algar



The Women of Faith Group took part in a joint event with the wonderfully successful MACFEST (Muslim Arts n Culture Festival) on the 19th January 2020.

The event took place at the Khizra Mosque in Cheetham Hill and was facilitated jointly by Qaisra Sharaz founder of MACFEST, Sandra Wong from the Khizra Mosque and Nabila Farooq and Ann Algar, Peer Leaders of Women of Faith. The event was a mixture of some light hearted and some more serious moments.

Nabila started the afternoon off speaking about a campaign called Answer Cancer which is encouraging women to access breast screening programmes and bowel screening kits sent your home. Some of the lack of uptake on these programmes can be cultural and there was a discussion about why this might be and how by signing up to be a Cancer Champion the message can be spread. Some women signed up to be champions.

This led to a more general discussion about about how cultural norms are passed down from our Grandparents and Parents with some amusing stories from different cultures.

We then had two creative poems about Manchester written and performed by Heather Fetcher The Co Chair of the Muslim Jewish Forum and some wonderful comedy from Comedian Marilyn Berg.

The afternoon passed far too quickly and ended with food and drink provided by the Mosque.

It was a very enjoyable afternoon and hopefully can be repeated at a later date.

Interfaith Thrives in Altrincham



Group photo from left to right: Mayor of Trafford Councillor Rob Chilton, AIG Chair Ruth Neal, Ghanshyam Nabar (guest speaker), Dawn Nabar, Chief Inspector Zeashan Nasim and Dawn Nasim. ©Paul Fertig 2020.

On Saturday 15th February an important event took place in Altrincham – 150 people of all faiths braved the wind and the rain to meet and share food and friendship under the auspices of Altrincham Interfaith Group. When our newspapers and the media appear to full of division in society, whether it be Brexit, HS2 or just politics in itself, it is heartening to see people of all faiths getting on together and having a good time. The event was attended by Mayor of Trafford Councillor Rob Chilton and his Chaplain Reverend Barbara Sharp and the Chief Inspector of Police in Trafford, Zeashan Nasim with his wife Dawn while the guest speaker was Hindu Ghanshyam Nabar whose work involves creating commercial links between India and Greater Manchester. He talked about the origin of Hinduism and how interfaith is so important in maintaining co-existence and social integrity.

Adults and children from different faith traditions offered prayers to start the evening and then the “Bring and Share” meal began, comprising Kosher and vegetarian starters provided by various Jewish communities, the main meal by the Hale and Altrincham Muslim Association with contributions from both Hindus and Ahmadiyya Muslims while delicious desserts were provided by the local Christian and Unitarian Churches and Chapels. It was a great example of togetherness and the room buzzed with chatter and enjoyment.

Thanks go to Altrincham Grammar School for Boys for use of their dining hall for the occasion and to Trafford Council for a Community Cohesion grant to help fund the event. Part of the money raised will go towards to Mayor of Trafford's Charities: Manchester Foundation Trust Charity, in particular Wythenshawe, Altrincham and Trafford hospitals, the Alex Hulme Foundation and the Society for Abandoned Animals.

By Carolyn Jones (Hon. Sec., Altrincham Interfaith Group and member of Dunham Road Unitarian Chapel)

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